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~~44.~~

(New) A system according to claim 1, wherein the broadcast means is arranged to address the data defining the at least one view of the 3D game environment to particular observers and to broadcast the data thereto.

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~~41.~~

(New) An apparatus according to claim ~~41~~, wherein the broadcasting means is operable to address the broadcast data to particular receivers and to broadcast the broadcast data thereto.

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(New) A system according to claim ~~32~~, wherein the broadcast data generator is operable to address the image data to particular observer apparatus and to broadcast the image data thereto.

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~~34.~~

(New) An apparatus according to claim ~~34~~, wherein the data broadcaster is operable to address the image data to particular observer apparatus and to broadcast the image data thereto.

REMARKS

Claims 1-14, 16-20, 22-24, 26 and 28-47 are presented for consideration.

Claims 1, 4, 18, 22, 23, 24, 26, 30 and 32-35 are independent.

Editorial changes have been made to several claims. In addition, Claims 36-47 have been added to provide an additional scope of protection.

In the final Office Action mailed August 27, 2002, all of the claims, i.e., Claims 1-14, 16-20, 22-24, 26 and 28-35, were rejected under 35 U.S.C. §102(b) as allegedly being anticipated by Applicants' admitted prior art. This rejection is respectfully traversed.

Representative Claim 1 relates to a system for playing a computer game, comprising a plurality of player apparatus for the input of user instructions and at least one game processing apparatus storing data defining a 3D game environment. The player apparatus and the game processing apparatus are connected and information is transferred to enable each player to view the status of the 3D game environment and to control one or more objects therein. As claimed, the system includes broadcast means for broadcasting data defining at least one view of the 3D game environment for receipt by a plurality of observers.

In accordance with Applicants' claimed invention, more than one observer can receive the same view of the 3D game.

The art discussed in the background section of Applicants' specification relates to a multiple player computer game having a plurality of player computer terminals 14 connected to the internet 12, a server 10 connected to the internet, and an observer 16 connected to the internet (see Figure 1).

As discussed in the background section, the observer terminal 16 sends control commands to the server to define a viewing position. In response to these commands, the server sends signals back to the observer terminal 16. As will be appreciated, therefore, the observer terminal 16 defines its own viewing position, and this viewing position is different from that of the computer terminals 14. This requires additional processing, which can detract from the performance of the system.

In Claim 1, on the other hand, broadcast data defining at least one view of the game is broadcast for receipt by a plurality of observers. By providing the plurality of observers with the same view, processing can be kept to a minimum.

Accordingly, it is submitted that Applicants' invention as set forth in Claim 1 is neither taught nor suggested by prior art Figure 1 and the accompanying description. For substantially the same reasons, independent Claims 4, 18, 22, 23, 24, 30 and 32-35 are also submitted to be patentable.

In Claim 26, a method of making a recording of video data includes the steps of receiving data defining a sequence of images of a 3D computer game environment in which objects are controlled by a plurality of players, and recording data defining images of the game on a storage device for distribution to a plurality of game observers.

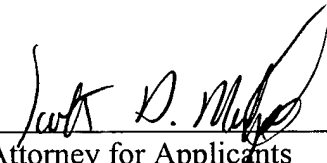
In contrast to prior art Figure 1, Applicants' claimed method records data defining images of the game on a storage device for distribution to a plurality of game observers.

Accordingly, it is submitted that Applicants' invention as set forth in independent Claims 1, 4, 18, 22, 23, 24, 26, 30 and 32-35 is patentable over the cited art. In addition, dependent Claims 2, 3, 5-14, 16, 17, 19, 20, 28, 29, 31 and 36-47 set forth additional features of Applicants' invention. Independent consideration of the dependent claims is respectfully requested.

Due consideration and prompt passage to issue are respectfully requested.

Applicants' undersigned attorney may be reached in our Washington, D.C.
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Respectfully submitted,



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VERSION WITH MARKINGS TO SHOW CHANGES MADE TO CLAIMS

2. (Amended) A system according to claim 1, wherein there is a [single] game processing apparatus having the form of a server to which each player apparatus is connected, and wherein object control signals are sent from the player apparatus to the game processing apparatus and information defining the status of the game environment is sent from the game processing apparatus to the player apparatus.

3. (Twice Amended) A system according to [claim1] claim 1, wherein each player apparatus includes a game processing apparatus, and wherein each player apparatus sends information to the other player apparatus defining changes made to the game environment by the player at the apparatus which sends the information.

4. (Twice Amended) A method of operating a computer graphics system to effect a computer game, which [the] graphics system comprises a plurality of player apparatus for the input of user instructions and at least one game processing apparatus storing data defining a 3D game environment, the method comprising the steps of:

transferring information between the player apparatus and the game processing apparatus to enable each player to view the status of the 3D game environment and to control one or more objects therein; and

broadcasting data defining at least one view of the 3D game environment for receipt by a plurality of observers to enable the observers to view the game.

5. (Four Times Amended) A method according to claim 4, performed in a graphics system including a [single] game processing apparatus having the form of a server, the method including sending object control signals from the player apparatus to the game processing apparatus and sending information defining the status of the game environment from the game processing apparatus to the player apparatus.

11. (Twice Amended) A computer graphics apparatus [operable to act as a game processing apparatus in a system according to claim 1], comprising:

storage means for storing data defining a 3D game environment;

game processing means for amending stored data in dependence upon player control of objects in the game environment [and for generating and outputting data relating to the game environment for receipt by each player];

means for generating broadcast data defining at least one view of the game environment; and

broadcasting means operable to [transmit] broadcast the broadcast data [on a broadcast channel].

18. (Twice Amended) A method of operating a computer graphics apparatus in which is stored data defining a 3D game environment, comprising the steps of:

updating the stored data in response to received signals defining player control of objects in the game;

[generating data relating to the game environment and outputting the data to each respective player;]

generating broadcast data defining at least one view of the game environment; and

broadcasting the broadcast data [on a broadcast channel] for receipt by a plurality of game observer apparatus.

22. (Twice Amended) A storage medium storing instructions for causing a programmable processing apparatus to become operable to:

update data defining a 3D game environment in accordance with signals defining control of objects in the game by a plurality of players;

[generate data relating to the game environment and output the data to each player;]

generate broadcast data defining at least one view of the game environment; and

broadcast the broadcast data for receipt by a plurality of game observer apparatus.

23. (Twice Amended) A signal carrying instructions for causing a programmable processing apparatus to become operable to:

update data defining a 3D game environment in accordance with
signals defining control of objects in the game by a plurality of players;

[generate data relating to the game environment and output the data to
each player;]

generate broadcast data defining at least one view of the game
environment; and

broadcast the broadcast data for receipt by a plurality of game observer
apparatus.

32. (Amended) A computer game processing system operable to process
data defining a three-dimensional computer game in accordance with instructions from a
plurality of game players and to generate data to enable a plurality of non-playing observers to
observe the playing of the game, the system comprising:

[a] at least one game processing apparatus storing data defining a three-
dimensional computer graphics computer game;

a plurality of player apparatus, each player apparatus being operable to
receive inputs from a respective player defining game control instructions;

at least one data communication link connecting the game processing
apparatus and the plurality of player apparatus to allow the transfer of data therebetween,
wherein

the game processing apparatus and the plurality of player apparatus are operable to exchange data via the at least one communication link to enable the players to play the game; and

the system further comprises:

a broadcast data generator operable to generate image data defining images to enable a plurality of observers to observe the playing of the game by the players and to broadcast the image data as a one-way, non-interactive conveyance of data; and

a plurality of observer apparatus, each observer apparatus being arranged to receive and display the image data broadcast by the broadcast data generator.

33. (Amended) A method performed in a computer graphics processing apparatus of processing data defining a three-dimensional computer graphics game, the method comprising the steps of:

processing stored game data in accordance with instructions received from a plurality of game players to control objects in the game[, and to generate and output data conveying the progress of the game for receipt by each of the respective players]; and

processing the stored game data to generate a sequence of images of the progressing game from at least one view, and broadcasting the image data as a one-way, non-interactive conveyance of data for receipt by a variable number of observer apparatus.

34. (Amended) A computer graphics processing apparatus, comprising:

a data store for storing game data defining a three-dimensional computer graphics game;

a game engine operable to process the stored game data in dependence upon received signals defining control of objects in the game by a plurality of players[, and operable to generate and output data conveying the progress of the game for receipt by each of the respective players];

an image data generator operable to process the stored game data to generate at least one sequence of images conveying the progress of the game as it is played by the players; and

a data broadcaster operable to broadcast the image data as a one-way, non-interactive conveyance of the data for receipt by a variable number of observer apparatus.

35. (Amended) A computer instruction carrier medium, carrying instructions for programming a programmable processing apparatus to become operable to:

process stored game data in accordance with instructions received from a plurality of game players to control objects in the game [and to generate and output data conveying the progress of the game for receipt by each of respective players]; and

process the stored game data to generate a sequence of images of the progressing game from at least one view, and to broadcast the image data as a one-way, non-interactive conveyance of data for receipt by a variable number of observer apparatus.